sential commodities have risen during the recent past to an unprecedented level;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies has gone on record in his interview with 'The Week' magazine, as published on May 6, 1990, to the effect that statewise unscrupulous traders are responsible for the price rise; and

(c) the number of traders, against whom action under the Law have been initiated during the current year so far ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL) : (a) No, Sir There has been a mixed trend in the prices of essential commodities. During the last seven weeks (between 17-3-90 and 5-5-90), the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) exhibited a rise in case of some of the essential commodities such as Wheat, Gram, *Arhar*, *Urad*, Potatoes, Tea, *Vanaspati*, Groundnut Oil, Mustard Oil and Cement; it showed a decline in case of Sugar, Barley, *Ragi*, Eggs, *Atta* and Coconut Oil; and remained steady in case of items like Kerosene, Salt, Mutton and Safety Matches

(b) In an interview with 'The Week' Magazine published on 6-5-90, Minister of Food and Civil Supplies had mentioned that after the presentation of Union Budget 'the general trend is for the traders to raise the price' The price increase according to him was, however, not justified as there were no new taxes on most of the consumer items

(c) Under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 during the year 1990 till 30-4-1990, 14,842 raids were conducted; 914 persons arrested; 636 persons prosecuted; 164 persons convicted and goods worth Rs. 187·83 lakhs confiscated.

Discouragement from Tobacco Cultivation

1885. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to discourage farmers from tobacco cultivation;

(b) what has been the season-wise production of tobacco during the last two years; and

(c) the details of the incentives, if any, to be provided to the farmers who give up tobacco cultivation and shift to other crops ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Of late, Tobacco Board is making efforts to discourage farmers from tobacco cultivation

(b) The production of tobacco for 1987-88 and 1988-89 are as under :

Year	Production (thousand tonnes)
1987-88 . .	367·4*
1988-89 . .	491·4

*Due to bad weather conditions (drought year).

(c) There is no proposal to extend any incentive to growers for giving up tobacco cultivation. However, the State governments will be advised to divert area under tobacco to other crops through their agri-

cultural extension machinery in view of anti-smoking campaign

Covering of verandah in government quarters, R.K. Puram, Delhi

1886. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether many allottees of Government quarters in R.K. Puram, Sector-4 are facing problem of security as the front and back side verandahs of many quarters particularly allotted under special pool have not been covered so far on one pretext or the other;

(b) whether the 'M' Division of CPWD located at R.K. Puram is not covering the verandahs despite the fact that allottees have deposited 10 per cent of the estimated cost;

(c) if so, the reason therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to expedite the work ?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (d) The work of covering the verandahs has already been completed in 23 out of the 37 quarters for which requests had been received. Work could not be done in the remaining quarters due to shortage of funds during 1989-90. The contract has already been awarded in respect of the remaining 14 quarters also.

Complaints pending with CPWD enquiry, R.K. Puram, Sector-4

1887. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the CPWD Enquiry Office at Sector 4, R.K. Puram is not attending to the complaints made by the allottees;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there is no co-ordination amongst the officials of the Enquiry Office, its employees and also 'M' Division;

(c) whether it is a fact that some employees and officials who are staying for very long periods are not sincere in their duties; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to revamp the functioning of the CPWD Enquiry office, R.K. Puram and 'M' Division so that the allottees do not face any problem ?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c) No, Sir.

(d) Even so, in order to improve the functioning of the Enquiry Office, frequent inspections of the Enquiry Office/ works are carried out by senior officers to ensure that allottee do not face any problem.

Promotion of brackish water fisheries

1888. SHRI JAGADISH JANI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps have been taken in some States to promote brackish water fisheries;

(b) whether any such steps have also been taken in this regard in Orissa; and

(c) if so, the approximate areas in the State developed for brackish water fisheries ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.